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The Argonauts

by EGERTON SYKES

The story of the journey of the *Argo*, commanded by Jason, to Colchis, the capture of the Golden Fleece, and the flight of the hero accompanied by Princess Medea has been relegated to the oblivion of children's tales for over two thousand years, and it is only recently that efforts have been made to place it in its proper historical focus.

Twenty-seven years ago, Miss Janet Bacon, then Director of Classical Studies at Girton, assembled all the evidence then available. It is my intention to carry the matter somewhat further, by effecting a partial reconciliation between the various versions of the story, and to put the episode in its proper relation to those other stories of Hercules and of Medusa which belong to the same period.

The Greeks were comparative latecomers in the Middle Seas. By the time that the first waves of Greeks began to make their way southward to the blue waters of the Mediterranean, there were already numerous trading settlements established by the Egyptians and others, not only on the coasts but far into the mainland of Southern Europe and European Russia, and stretching right across Asia as far as China.

For this reason all early Greek attempts at colonisation or trade could only be at the expense of their predecessors, and were not, as one might imagine, fruitful attempts to open up virgin lands. By the time that the Greeks had established themselves, they had managed to forget this side of the story, and to assert that they were the first comers, which was certainly not the case.

The story of Jason is, in its essentials, a simple one. A King, having been deposed by his younger brother, had his son brought up to regard himself as the rightful heir. On reaching his majority he claimed the throne from his uncle, and was told that he could have it only after having brought back the Golden Fleece from Colchis. This task he accomplished with the aid of a crew of heroes, his ship the *Argo*, and the aid of the Princess Medea. He returned home, took over the throne, and, presumably, lived happily ever after.

That Jason was a contemporary of Hercules is reasonably certain, although he may well have been twenty years his junior.

From Homer we know that Jason founded a royal house at Lemnos, and that he had been concerned in a sea adventure. However, as Homer must have written about 1250 B.C., it is obvious from the scanty references that the story of Jason to which he refers was already so old as to have been almost forgotten. It is for this reason that I refuse to accept the dates of about 1200 B.C., given by Eratosthenes and Eusebius, and place the whole episode at several hundred years earlier, at the latest—this date being that of the fall of the third city of Troy, presumably when it was sacked by Hercules.

As Jason was the grandson of Aeolus, founder of the dynasty, the first Greek kingdom in this area must have been about 2000 B.C. His father, Aeson, was deposed by Pelias, and forced to flee. Jason was sent to the famous academy of the Centaur Chiron, where he was educated with other noble youths until he reached manhood. On leaving school he proceeded directly to his uncle to demand the return of his kingdom. Whether he himself proposed the capture of the Golden Fleece or whether his uncle did so is immaterial, the obvious difficulty of the task shows that the uncle felt quite safe in staking his throne against it.

The Golden Fleece is the subject of an earlier legend. In the previous generation the two children of Nephele, grandchildren of King Aeolus, were in danger of being murdered by their father's second wife. They fled eastwards on a vessel called the Flying Ram and Helle was drowned in the Hellespont, while Phryxius, her brother, managed to reach Colchis, where the skin of the ram was kept in a temple.

For a long time this story has puzzled me. Either the name of the ship and that of the golden fleece resembled each other and later became confused, or it is just possible that Phryxius knew the secret of the golden fleece, to which I shall refer later, and took it with him to Colchis.

In order to reach Colchis, Jason commissioned Argo the shipbuilder to construct a fifty oared galley, which was later called the ARGO after the builder. A vessel with fifty oars, seems to have been the largest type of sea-going vessel known to the Greeks at that time. On the assumption that it did not travel at night, the crew would have to be at least sixty, presuming all the heroes who took part were prepared to take a turn at the oars and were not supernumary to establishment. The Argo is said to have been

portable, in the same manner as the ships of the Aesir, which must have meant that it could be carried over land on rollers.

The volunteer crew included the fathers of all the great men of the next generation. One is tempted to feel that like the passenger list of the Mayflower a certain expansion took place in subsequent generations. However, we are scarcely concerned with the crew, except for the fact that Hercules travelled on the ship for the first portion of the journey, our main interest being with the captain, Jason.

The ship having been launched with suitable prayers and blessings, it sailed from Eolcus for the Black Sea, which at about that time changed its name from Axine, The Unfriendly, to Euxine, The Friendly, thus showing that the Greeks were beginning to find their way about it.

The first stop was at the Amazonian Island of Lemnos, ruled over by Queen Hypsipyle. Here the ship stayed several months, sufficiently long for Jason to become the father of Eumenos by the Queen. Eumenos, who became King on the death of his mother, was mentioned by Homer as sending supplies for the Trojan War.

After leaving Lemnos, the Argo called at the land of the Doliones, ruled over by Cyzicus. This was a small peninsula on the South side of the Sea of Marmora. Here the Argonauts became involved in a local war, in which the king was killed. Whether they were the attackers or the defenders is not clear, what seems obvious is that this was an early trading settlement on the route to the Black Sea.

The next port of call was Bithynia, now the Skutari peninsula opposite Istanbul, where Hercules was left behind. Here were encountered not only the blind king Phineas, who was pestered by the harpies, who were driven away, but also King Amycus, of an adjacent area, who was forced to stake his kingdom at the challenge of any visitor who desired to fight him. Pollux is said to have done so and to have won, staying behind as king.

The passage through the Sympleades rocks, at the entrance to the Black Sea, must refer to some natural obstruction which no longer exists. It is clear that great skill was needed to pass them without being dashed against them by the waves, hence the story that the rocks opened and shut at regular intervals.

Although the Black Sea was almost unknown to the Greeks, the Egyptians had long before established a chain of trading posts along the northern and eastern shores, a fact which has been confirmed by such authorities as Herodotus, Diodorus, and Apollonius Rhodius. Apart from the Egyptians, the Celts had a chain of settlements for trade down the Danube, and the Norsemen had worked down to the middle of European Russia in a similar manner.

The Argo, however, decided to hug the southern shores of the Black Sea, and in due course reached the Island of Aretas, where the Priestesses of Stymphalus had sought refuge after having been raided by Hercules. These unfortunate women were again attacked by the Argonauts, but this time the battle seems to have been indecisive.

Before reaching their destination they sighted the snow capped Caucasus and heard the rumble of an earthquake or an eruption, a fact which may one day enable the date of the trip to be fixed more accurately.

Eventually the Argo reached Colchis the land of King Aetes, the capital city of which lay some miles up the river Phasis. According to Herodotus and other writers the Colchians were of Egyptian descent, in that they were dark skinned, practising circumcision and other Egyptian rites. That King Aetes was rich is shown by the descriptions of his palace and possessions, and by his subsequently being able to send a fleet in pursuit of Jason.

Here I must digress for a moment and point out that the wealth and power of King Aetes was not accidental. It arose from the fact that he controlled the main terminal port of the most important trade route of the ancient world, stretching from China through the Gobi Desert and Turkestan to Hrycan, the port of the Caspian or Hrycanian Sea on to Teheran, where one branch went via Ecbatana—the modern Hamadan—to Babylon; and the other via Tabriz to the River Phasis and the Kingdom of Aetes.

For how long this route had been open it is difficult to say. That there was a Chinese civilisation round about 4000 B.C.—at which time a Sothic Cycle began in Lower Egypt—seems certain and the myths and legends of China which have come down to us show evidences of contacts with the barbaric nations to the west-

ward, as far as the Middle Seas, certainly at the time of the Hsia Dynasty, ca 2000 B.C.

Another point which possibly facilitated trade was the fact that the chain of lakes stretching from the former Gobi Sea to the Caspian had not dried up to their present extent, the Caspian and Aral Seas being one, Lake Balkash being much larger, as was also the case with the minor lakes between there and Lake Balkial. This relative abundance of water enabled the trade routes to be opened up without great difficulty.

Apart from the great importance of Poti—the present name for the town at the mouth of the Phasis—as a traffic centre, it would seem that it was the centre for the disposal of the alluvial gold found in the rivers of the Caucasus. I am aware that at present the gold supplies of this area, as with Britain, are no more, but four thousand years ago they may have been large enough for the economy of the period.

It is in this that a possible solution of the Golden Fleece comes in. Many years ago, as a child, I remember reading that alluvial gold miners in Australia and the Americas, used sheep skins as a means for trapping the grains of fine gold in suspension in the water. This method, I understand, had been picked up from natives and had been in use for long periods of time.

It may be that Phrixus brought this system of collecting gold to Colchis, and that a ceremonial fleece, bedecked with gold, was kept in the grove of the temple, as representing the source of prosperity of the town.

Although Jason, as the cousin of Phryxus, would have a certain claim, the proposal that he should calmly be allowed to walk off with the golden fleece, was calculated to arouse the strongest opposition from King Aetes and his court. It was therefore not surprising that Jason was coolly received, and it was only after a certain amount of dickering that he was even allowed to try his hand at harnessing the brazen bulls to the plough and sowing the dragon's teeth.

The brazen bulls had been constructed by the famous artificer Hephaestus, and as they were fire breathing, the whole contraption may well have been an early agricultural tractor. I have always felt that the use of fire and steam, in a crude fashion, was known to mankind far earlier than has been assumed, but that the use of such appliances would be restricted to places where fuel was to be

obtained—as for example the crude oil from Batoum—and that they would be kept for amusement rather than use.

Those who have read accounts of the effect of the first steam locomotives in this country will appreciate the fear that such a contraption would arouse in Jason. However, thanks to the love which he had aroused in the heart of the Princess Medea, he learnt how to handle the monster and to plough the field of Ares.

It must not be forgotten that such a series of events could not have passed unnoticed among the local populace, who would turn up in their thousands to see the trials, with much the same interest as the Romans watched Christians being fed to the lions, or a modern crowd will go to a bull fight or a boxing match.

Because of this I feel that the fight amongst the soldiers who arose from the sowing of the dragon's teeth, was more likely to have been between the soldiers of the King and the crowd, creating a confusion in the midst of which Jason escaped back to his ship. The refusal of the king to hand over the fleece on the grounds that the success had been obtained by treachery, is understandable.

In the darkness of night Medea went to Jason and told him that her father had determined to destroy the Argo and its crew, and that he must make haste to seize the Fleece and flee, otherwise death awaited him.

The story of the love of Medea the Sybil for Jason the adventurer has within it the components of most of the great love stories of history. Medea was an healer, endowed with the knowledge of potions and drugs, she was also a magician of no mean order, an art which she had in common with Isis and Freya. She was the titular descendant of a mother goddess, and it is for this reason that so much evil was spoken of her after her arrival in Greece.

The actual removal of the Golden Fleece from the Grove of Ares, seems to have been accomplished by drugging the guard. Medea as Priestess of Hecate and cousin of Circe, would know all about sleep inducing drugs. It is an interesting point whether the word "Dragon" did not mean the commander of a palace guard, rather than an animal.

After the theft had been accomplished, the Argo, bearing Jason and Medea, sped silently into the night. When the deed was discovered King Aetes sent a fleet of ships in pursuit, but Jason had fled Northwards and Westwards, and the fleet only caught up with him at the Gulf of Kertsch, at the entrance of the

Sea of Azof, some 500 miles away, or a good ten days trip under favourable conditions.

I am aware that some chroniclers say that the battle took place at the mouth of the Ister or Danube, but that was at least a month's journey, and no fleeing commander would dare to have taken such a risk when safety lay only ten days distant. Here Absyrtus, step brother of Médea, and commander of the fleet was defeated by a stratagem, and killed. However this meant only temporary respite, as with the remainder of the fleet in the offing the Argo could not take to the open sea, and had no alternative but to go up the Tanais—the modern River Don—and the main trading route between the Baltic and Black Sea.

The earliest mention of the use of this route was by Timaeus in 300 B.C., as reported by Diodorus two hundred and sixty years later. The Orphic Argonaut also says that they passed from the sea of Maeotis (The Sea of Azof) northwards, through the lands of the Scythians and the Hypoboreans. Scymnus of Chios, in 100 B.C. said that the Argo took the northward route via the Tanais, and that to get from one river to another they took the ship on rollers.

The route actually followed was that of the Egyptian traders, who had long before established a trading post at Tanais at the mouth of the Don, and who had gone northwards to the Great Bend, where they had carried their ships overland to the Volga, a distance of some thirty miles, to a point near the Stalingrad of today.

The Egyptians had penetrated southwards to the Hrycanian or Caspian Sea, and had established themselves at Astrakhan—the City of Isis-Ra and had gone northwards as far as Moscow—which means a hide or fur town in Egyptian. The very name of the Volga, the Rha, meant river of the Sun God. The story of the founding of Moscow by Prince Dolgoruki in 1156, seems to have meant that he took over an already existing trading settlement which had been there since time immemorial. The river between Nijni Novgorod and Moscow has a tributary the Pra or Pharaoh, showing Egyptian influence.

Many years later this same route was used by the Norsemen going southwards to the Black and Caspian Seas, and the transporting of their ships between rivers was an usual practice. The Argo then having been carried across country to the Volga, made

its way northward to Rjev, from where they would have to transport it some 45 miles over land to get to the upper reaches of the Dvina, with a clear run down to the Gulf of Riga.

However, even although this route was one commonly in use it is doubtful if the journey northwards could have been accomplished in less than six months, and a refit would be necessary before going to sea again. That the Baltic was known to the Greeks is shown by a reference to the Cronian Sea in the Geography of Periegesis of Dionysius. Eustachius, commenting on this in about A.D. 1180 considered that the Cronian Sea was called "dead" by the Orphic Argonaut, because the sun could not pierce the mists, which would indicate that the Argo arrived in Autumn, and managed to get away by spring.

Having, after much trouble, arrived in the Baltic, the next problem to be faced was how to get back to Greece. Here they had a choice of routes, the amber routes, by means of which the golden succinite of the Frische Nehrung, stretching from Danzig to Konigsberg, and the Kurische Nehrung, from Konigsberg (Krantz) to Memel, found its way to the south.

The first and most important of these routes was down the Vistula via Bydgoszcz and Krakow, thence to Eastern Galicia and down the Dniester to the Black Sea. The second involved branching off this route at Krakow, striking southwards over the Tatras to the Danube or Ister, and thence to Bucharest (Ister Mouth) and the Black Sea. However, as either these routes would have put the Argo into the lion's mouth again, I feel that a route further to the west was chosen.

Although the Elbe, Moldau, Trieste journey looks tempting on the map, it would have meant abandoning the Argo, so I feel that the Rhine-Rhone one was the one taken. There is a mention of "Stormy lakes which spread throughout the Celtic Mainland" in Apollonius, which might well mean Switzerland, particularly as it was followed by sailing down the Rhodanus or Rhone to its mouth. This, therefore, is the route that was taken back to the Mediterranean.

After reaching the mouth of the Rhone, the ship would follow the coast line home, going round the south of Italy and up the Adriatic, which would explain the references to an attempt to sail up the Eridanus or Po. Then down the Dalmatian Coast, round the south of Greece and home.

The journey took four years, which is scarcely surprising. Even although the routes used were those which had been open to travellers for many years, still to the Greeks it was a great adventure. As an expedition it was comparable to one of the piratical raids against the Spanish Main undertaken by Sir John Hawkins, and other seamen of the Elizabethan period.

In its net results, apart from its effect on Jason and his bride Medea, it may have advanced the spread of Greek ideas in the Middle East by a couple of hundred years. The only pity is that by the time that the Greeks began to take up writing seriously the tide of events had shifted the focus from the Euxine to the Mediterranean, and all the information so hardily gathered by their forbears had degenerated into myth and legend.

After all this time it is not possible to say that one has proved ones case, but I feel in all honesty that I have made out a good one for the actual existence of Jason, the Argo, Medea, and the long and involved route via the Don, the Volga, the Dvina, the Baltic, the Rhine, the Rhone, back home.

The list of authorities consulted is, unfortunately, too long for publication here. It is, however, available for consultation.

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Flood Myths

(PART 3)

by HUGH SOAR

The preceding myths require a certain amount of explanation. The first, dealing with the coming of Osiris is factual until the end, when it dissolves into the dramatic. Osiris was worshipped in connection with the Moon, he was also an agricultural deity. His suffocation has been explained as the eclipse of the moon; his dismemberment as the plucking, winnowing, and distribution of the grain. He was a prominent God in Egyptian religious circles for a considerable time. The second and third myths also relate the arrival of a culture hero. The fourth, taken from the book of Revelations of St. John the Divine is presented out of context, and appears as a prediction. The construction that can be placed upon this myth, relative to others of similar, though less obscure nature is that a disaster has occurred and that the culture hero is looking upon a city which he has caused to be founded. The whole subject is treated fully in "The Book of Revelation is History", H. S. Bellamy (Faber & Faber). The fifth, and last myth quoted is a continuation of the Flood myth quoted in chapter one. It is a literal translation of part of the Icelandic Eddas, and describes the building of a culture by survivors of the Flood to which chapter one refers. 'Middlegarden' is the translation of the Norse 'Mid-Gard'.

The stages through which the drama of the Culture⁷Deluge Hero passes are five. They are as follow:

1. The Hero arrives at a strange land.
2. He is invariably of a different race.
3. He makes laws, introduces culture.
4. He either then (a) goes away again, or (b) is slain amidst magical surroundings.
5. He is deified and worshipped.

Again, the first three stages are factual, and the remainder mystical. By natural selection, a leader appears out of chaos as always happens in disasters. This leader is either of higher culture, and one of few survivors, or else a refugee who has foreseen the flood (by either astronomical deduction, or by observation of

the encroachment of the waters that occurred as the moon, still an independent satellite planet exerting its influence upon the earth), and joined a tribe in what he has deemed to be a safe area. He has raised the standard of the group of people whom he has joined to a higher cultural level, therefore the Hero is deified and his movements and teachings became mystical. This probably took place after his death, so that the Hero can be said to have had two deaths, the first natural, and the second mystical. The mystical death is dramatised, and appears as a dramatic rite; the events leading to the climax (death), are portrayed in ritual drama throughout the year. Of the myths quoted, numbers 1, 3, and 5 fall within this category.

The culmination of Myth 5, the Eddas, is Ragnarok. Thor is slain by the Fenris Wolf, a cosmic symbol.

The myths of Noah and Adam have been withheld since they are familiar Biblically. Noah was probably a Deluge Hero, and re-peopled the earth, introducing culture. In its present Biblical position, Genesis, the myth of Adam and Eve, and Lilith does not contribute a great deal to this essay, since its significance is purely theological. If it is regarded as part of a culture/deluge myth, with Adam and Eve as the principal characters, then Adam becomes a culture hero. The rest of the myth shades off into mysticism.

Summing up, the culture hero survivors of the flood established culture, and become worshipped as Gods by their people and their descendants.

CHAPTER V.

Connection of flood and culture, fertility and other dramatic rites with Ancient Religion.

In the same manner that King George VI of England can trace his descent back to the Scandinavian Gods, and so to Odin Allfather, the kings of pre-history traced their ancestry back to the culture heroes of remote antiquity. As these culture heroes were deified and identified with God thus the Kings associate themselves with God. Thus the king became not only the governor of his people, but also their spiritual leader. He was in fact a Divine King. One example will show that the practice of Divine Kingship was contemporary with the Babylonian/Chaldean civilisation, one of the earliest recorded in the World, and also formed

part of an Iberian civilisation. Sir Leonard Woolley, in his excavations at Ur, uncovered a graveyard outside the city walls. In this graveyard he discovered several pits, containing, besides beautifully carved tombs, constructed for the occupants who were obviously of Royal blood, the bodies of courtiers, soldiers and artisans, stores, bullock carts, and in fact, all the possessions that would be required to set up court in the after-life. The archaeological evidence showed that whilst the royal personages had been entombed first, with great splendour, the many other people with them seemed to have gone to their death voluntarily. This was suggested by the fact that no marks of violence were to be found on any of the bodies. Sir Leonard also uncovered a large cauldron, which, he suggests, might have been used for the preparation and distribution of a form of narcotic. The court, he infers, drank from this cauldron, slept, and were buried alive, with due ceremony. The second illustration is recorded in Ellena Wishaw's book, 'Atlantis in Andalucia'. In 1851, the 'Cave of the Bats' near Albunol, in the province of Granada in Spain was opened. Entombed behind stones, in a narrow gallery, three skeletons were found. One wore a crown of gold weighing nearly five centigrams. Further in, three more skeletons were found. Still further in, another sixty-two skeletons were discovered. Twelve of these were grouped around the seated skeleton of a woman. With few exceptions the skeletons each had a small bag made of esparto grass which seems to have contained food. Profusely scattered around the skeletons were poppy heads. Each of the inhabitants appeared to have died both voluntarily and peacefully, whilst the seated woman, from her attitude, and her position in the centre of the group, seems to have been dead before she was brought into the cave. A monolith, seven metres high, stood outside the cave, which was blocked by stones.

The circumstances of Divine Kingship having evolved, certain functions were expected of the King, by his people. He was expected to control the fertility of crops, cattle, and women, and amongst other things he ensured good weather and the conditions necessary for the maintenance of a proper standard of living. So that the conditions that he had brought about should continue without interruption, the people arranged to kill and replace their king periodically, (thought to be once every seven years). The ceremonial killing of the King was carried out it is thought, by

his son, or by the tribal magician. The son then married either his mother, or his sister, in order to preserve the royal line unbroken. Echoes of the ritual dramas, commemorating the rites of Divine Kingship can be found in 'fairy tales', noticeably in those which have for their theme the relief of an oppressed country from the tyrannical rule of a King, by the intervention of a young stranger who kills the king. The young stranger assumes the responsibility of King-ship, and all is magically right once more in the country. The stranger also gets the hand of the youngest daughter in marriage. This may be a case of 'love interest', introduced by the dramatic actors or may refer to the young King's ceremonial marriage to his sister, only made possible by the death of their father, the old King. It is interesting to note that the present Royal family seldom if ever, marry commoners.

Divine King-ship evolved therefore from the identification of a Deluge/Culture Hero with a God. The original purpose of the worship of the Deluge Hero, that of propitiation as a safeguard against possible future occurrences of disasters, as supplanted by a more utilitarian need for crop safety, and fertility necessary for the propagation of the race. Sir James Frazer, in his 'Golden Bough', states that Divine King-ship is the supplanting of primitive magic, by reasoned theology, and the evolution of a religious concept. Deluge Heroes then, through the priestly caste who bore their name, affected ancient religions to the extent of furnishing in many cases, their supreme deities. They were often identified with solar, and lunar symbols.

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Celtic Irish Fairy Tales

Sir LEONARD WOOLLEY
 Sir LEONARD WOOLLEY
 Mrs. E. M. WISHAW
 Sir JAMES FRAZER
 WENTZ

CHAPTER VI.

Effects of dramatic rites upon present day Christianity.

In Chapter IV, Sir James Frazer was quoted as saying 'Divine Kingship' is the supplanting of primitive magic, by 'reasoned theology, and the evolution of a religious concept'. The practice of magic, however primitive or advanced it may be, involves the use of ritual, fetish, and symbolism. Whether the magic is 'sym-

pathetic' and involves the pouring of water to obtain rain, or whether it is sacrificial and propitiatory, it has its attendant rites. Its neophytes were instructed in their priestly schools by learned men, versed in the application of their arts, and convinced that an incorrectly drawn pentagon, or a misplaced entrail would mar their work, just as a careless artist can ruin his canvas by an ill placed stroke. Their magic was rough and practical, their theology crude; they reasoned with logic, that if the God they sought to propitiate were not satisfied with their sacrifices, he would withhold his gifts from them.

As Frazer has illustrated in 'The Golden Bough', from this rough and ready theology, evolved the religious concept of the Divine King. This religion and its attendant theology constitutes a fine example of early religious faith. The King, in his dual role of King, and God so held his people that they apparently went voluntarily to his grave and as an act of faith were buried alive with him. The usual sacrifices of course took place. Sir Leonard Woolley records that at the excavation of the Ur Royal graves, human sacrifices were found. Traces of Divine Kingship are though also to have been found in Africa, since many myths and legends, as well as customs apparently connected with this faith have been recorded. Indeed our 'pagan' ancestors seem to have had a great deal more faith in the afterlife than their counterparts today. Ancient Celts in Gaul are known to have lent each other money quite freely to be paid back in the 'other-world'.

From this crude, but remarkable theology monotheism evolved, and with it the rise of Christianity. That the Christian religion contains much ritual drama is obvious. Symbolism, pomp, and pageantry together with mysticism, in fact all the ingredients of the ancient religions combine with a deep philosophy, and a profound ethical code, and adaptability to hold and attract people to the worship of a common God.

When Christianity was first introduced to Britain, it had to combat, and compete with other well established pagan religions, of local rather than national importance. The method adopted was adaptation. Where, for example well worship existed, the well was taken over, so to speak, by an officially recognised Christian saint. The people found that instead of worshipping their own Gods, through the media of the wells sacred to them, they were worshipping alien Saints of a new religion. This was

the thin end of the wedge. They accepted the new Saints, they were satisfied, the Church was satisfied, and all was well. However, there still remain at least two wells in Britain which retain their pagan names. Thus we have Thor's Well in Yorkshire, and Woden's Well in Gloucestershire. Even today though, the old traditions linger on, devoid of the rites that once accompanied them. Certain wells in Britain have the reputation of being haunted, others are believed to confer wealth, or grant wishes, for a small sacrifice, such as a pin. The worship of stones has degenerated to the belief that kissing, or touching will bring wealth or happiness. Sometimes small effigies were placed in niches of rocks or worshipped wells, these were blessed as Christian Saints statues, and once again the people found themselves worshipping a strange new God. But the old religions lingered on; the last hard core is not yet dead. At least three of the great Celtic religious festivals are still recognised to this day, their rites debase, they still remain. They are:

1. SAMHAIN	(Hallow'een)	November 1st
2. BELTAINE	(Mayday)	May 1st
3. LUGNASSAD	(Lammas)	August 1st
4. OIMELC	(Candlemass)	February 1st/2nd not now observed

The Celtic year, which commenced on November 1st, was based on a Solar Calendar. The Christian Church saw the great festivals which occurred at Samhain, and 'legalised' it by calling it the 'Festival of All Saints', or 'All Saints' Day'. The celebrants in the eyes of the Church at least, were thus worshipping Christian Saints, and not Celtic Gods. The practice of lighting bonfires on Hallow'een still persists in the more remote parts of Celtic Britain, although in most cases it occurs a few days later, on November 5th, in so called perpetuation of the memory of one Guy Fawkes. The perfectly innocuous present day ceremonies connected with Beallteinn, the choosing of a May Queen, dancing around the Maypole, the pageants of Robin Hood and Jack o'the Green all derive from earlier, far less innocuous rites and dramas when the day was devoted to the fertility rites of Baal or Beltane.

Lugnassad, or Lammas-tide, has no ceremony attached to it now, although it was primarily a Solar Festival in honour of Lugh, the Celtic Solar Deity and his mother Tailtiu (or Eithne). It is

a Scottish quarter day, as of course are the other three quarterly Celtic Festivals.

Yule tide, which had definite Druidic associations, has become so intermingled with the festival of Christmas as to lose its individuality almost entirely. The few associations are, (1) bringing home and burning the yule log, (2) hanging evergreen and holly, and the piece of mistletoe, and (3) the festival and fare connected with Boxing day.

Since the ritual of Christianity usurps rather than supplants the rituals of older religions, the effects of rites of vast antiquity can be directly traced through thousands of years to the catastrophe that caused their inception, the Flood.

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English Folk Heroes

History and Origins of Druidism

Sir JAMES FRAZER

LONG

Miss C. HOLE

L. SPENCE

CONCLUSION.

It is an undeniable fact that the myths of Troy, of Ur of the Chaldees, and of the Flood have been proved to have foundation in history. These myths deal however with cities and catastrophies and not with people. Furthermore, their situation thousands of miles away somewhat negatives the effect that the proof of their existence might have. These myths therefore have little meaning if similar instances cannot be brought to light nearer home. The following paragraphs will illustrate that a myth, as old as the hills, and apparently founded upon nothing more than legend is not only true, but uncannily accurate in detail. The myth, or legend, is of a character, rather than of a place.

The outlet of the subterranean river Axe occurs at Wookey Hole Cave in the Mendips. The fairy tails that surround all such places tell that long long ago, in the dim past, there lived in Wookey Hole a hag who made herself so unpleasant to the surrounding villagers that she came to be regarded as a witch. She lived in the Cave with her goats, and her witches crystal ball and assumed the reputation of being a particularly malevolent evil spirit. In the Celtic story of 'Cullwch and Olwen', reference is made to the Black Witch, daughter of the White Witch who lived in a cave at the head of the 'stream of sorrow', on the confines of

Hell. Cullwch wished for Olwen's hand in marriage, but was told by her father Ysbaddaden that first he must perform a number of seemingly impossible tasks, amongst which was the killing of this Black Witch. King Arthur however accompanied Cullwch on his missions, and eventually slew the hag. The tale is included in the Mabinogion (Lady Guest's).

However, the approach to Wookey Hole is known as Hell's Ladder, and the cave itself as Hell. The river Axe is also known as the Stream of Sorrow, and Arthur's Point is the name of a neighbouring hill.

The following extract from the translation of the Welsh 'Black Book of Carmarthen' is interesting, as it apparently refers to the Witch in Question:

*Though Arthur was playing,
The blood was dripping,
A fight with a hag,
He slew Pem-Palach,
In Awarnachs Hall,
In the tasks of Dissethach.*

In the year 1912, under ten feet of debris at the cave mouth, there were found the bones of a woman, minus the top of her skull, her bones bent as they would be had she been used to squatting on her haunches. Near her were found the bones of several goats, and, again nearby, was found a crystal ball of stalagmite. A crude milking pot, and various instruments were also found. A thin layer of stalagmite covered everything. A conservative estimate of the age of this legend is 2,000 years. It is logical to assume that if the legend of the Witch of Wookey can be transmitted over twenty centuries at least, and still be true in detail, then legends and myths of vastly greater antiquity have at least a reasonable chance of truth.

Thus, assembling our facts we see that archaeological proof exists of extensive flooding, substantiating at least one of the great flood epics. We see that ancient religions were affected by this universal flood by virtue of the worship of surviving flood heroes. We have seen that the culture/flood heroes have had historical foundation, and we have archaeological evidence that great cities were overthrown by flood. We have heard theories of the causes of the flood, and have had examples of ancient pagan customs and festivals later supplanted by Christianity. Whether

we can accept the theory that the mythical story of the Floods has had direct influence upon contemporary religion depends upon several things; not the least of these being our approach to mythology itself.

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GWYN JONES and THOMAS JONES

Atlantean Sites

by EDWARD S. SCHULTZ

The following article is published through courtesy of BSRA of 3524 Adams Avenue, San Diego 16, California, U.S.A.

Your attention is directed to a question affecting the lives and interests of all human beings on our planet. A question, and a proposed answer:

Could the Atomic Bombs exploded up to this time be the basic cause of the world-wide vagaries and serious abnormalities of weather and climate, of which the unprecedented reversals of weather phenomena in the U.S.A. are such noteworthy examples.

It is my well-considered theory that atomic bomb explosions can be, and very likely are the fundamental though indirect cause of the widespread and apparently increasing cycles of upheavals of weather and possibly of climate in various parts of the world. Everyone is aware of the great droughts, heat waves, blizzards, cold spells, and great winds which have swept through parts of Europe. Such phenomena have been noted on practically every continent, and no one can be sure that the maximum stage has yet been reached or passed. What is the answer to this enigma?

Let me hasten to assert that I am in complete accord with scientific evidence and opinion that the atomic bomb explosions, as such and by themselves, could not and did not have any effect on the weather, even in the vicinity of the explosion. The explosions are *relatively* puny and could not have direct effect on the meteorological forces of Nature.

However, it is my own theory that it is a far different matter if the role of the *fission products* of atomic bomb explosions is properly analyzed and considered in the light of radioactive ioni-

zation of gases in general and its effect on the oxygen content of the higher atmosphere in particular. Let us see what could happen in the above case, in terms of nuclear physics.

The highly radioactive and unstable fission products, or elements, split off in the atomic explosion of U-235, for example, first fission into the lighter elements Xenon and Strontium, and subsequently into a series of other elements, until they wind up as more or less stable elements. The primary fission releases from one to three neutrons for every atom of U-235 that is split, and the sum total of the fissioning happens almost instantly. However, the subsequent atomic adjustments of the fission product elements emit veritable storms or showers of Beta particles (negative electrons) and Gamma rays, which are akin to X-rays.

Beta and Gamma radiations have powerful ionizing effects on atoms in general and on some atoms in particular. This would be much enhanced by virtue of the great quantities and intensities of the above ionizing radiations and the fact that their emission from the fission products is spread out over a relatively long time. How could these phenomena affect natural laws governing weather and climate?

As we know, both the force of the atomic bomb explosion, and the intensely heated gases and fissions product thereof, are quickly carried high into the upper atmosphere and dispersed therein. There, the ionizing effects of the fission products (Beta and Gamma) can freely and continuously react on such gasses as prevail at such heights; but in this case their effect upon Oxygen should be particularly studied.

In the upper atmosphere there is a more or less well-defined layer or "shell" of a modified form of oxygen, i.e., ozone, which is continuously generated from ordinary oxygen by the action of solar ultraviolet rays. And it is a widely known scientific fact that it is precisely this relatively thin shell of ozone around the earth (from 10 to 20 miles high, above sea level) that serves as a powerful absorber and modifier of solar energy or radiation. It serves, in fact, as a valve for modifying and controlling the amount of solar energy we receive. Anything, therefore, that would affect the oxygen-ozone cycle would be practically certain to influence weather or climate, since these depend largely on the amount of this solar energy that is valved through by the ozone shell. If the relative weak ultraviolet radiations from the sun can create the

ozone layer and keep this cycle going, it is obvious that the far more potent radiations from the atomic fission products, reaching this ozone layer, would cause profound changes and disruption of the oxygen-ozone valving cycle.

The question might be posed as to whether the atom-bomb fission products might not become so evenly dispersed throughout the atmosphere that it would be impossible for this phenomenon to create abnormalities of weather or climate in spot areas as these appear to be concentrated in the western States of this country. The answer is, that there are several factors which could prevent such an even dispersion, but which would tend to vary concentrations of the fission products from time to time and place to place. These might include trade winds or currents in the upper air, effects of the rotation of the earth, seasonal changes, perhaps the effects of the earth's magnetic fields, etc., and the fact that the ozone content of the solar energy governing ozone layer varies with surface air pressure. It is known that the ozone layer is thicker and lower at the Poles, and that the ozone content of the air is greatest in spring and least in summer.

If the above theory is correct—and there do not seem to be any logical arguments to the contrary, it is obvious that any atomic bombs exploded would tend to increase the effect on the weather and/or climates of the world. Furthermore, it must be remembered that such fission products or radioactive wastes as are daily released from atomic piles, anywhere in the world, would also serve to increase the effects explained above. In fact, because the creation of such wastes is continuous and cumulative this source might in due time become equivalent to one or more atomic bomb explosions. And it can readily be seen that the role of the dispersed fission products (from atom bombs or uranium reactors) in relation to the equilibrium of the ozone "shell", would be that of a disruptive, modifying or triggering agent, subsequently influencing world weather and perhaps climatic conditions.

It is hoped that nuclear scientists, with far greater research facilities and spheres of action than this writer has at his command, will take over this avenue of study in behalf of corroborative end results.

Weather Abnormalities and the Atomic Bomb

by ARTHUR LOUIS JOQUEL

The quest for Atlantis has led researchers to many locations other than the lost continent in the centre of the Atlantic Ocean. Plato, who specifically located it there, is also responsible for the most precise description which has come down to us from antiquity of the form and dimensions of both the city of Poseidonis and the vast shaped plain on which it stood. And Plato's Atlantean dialogues are such precisely constructed and closely knit narratives that it is difficult to separate the various elements. It would therefore seem logical that if a part of Plato's story is accepted, it should be maintained in its entirety.

Yet the mid-oceanic placing has been rejected by many atlantologists, who have then proceeded to search in the far corners of the Earth for a land and a city answering Plato's description. These speculations are usually based on an apparent belief that Plato, the greatest and wisest of the Greeks, did not know East from West, or that he exaggerated distances and dimensions, or that his words have been altered in the course of their descent to to the present day.

It has been relatively easy for some imaginative antiquarians, by an exercise of mental ingenuity, to locate the salient features of Plato's dialogue—the Pillars of Heracles, the plain surrounded by mountains, and the "great sea"—in various parts of the world. But the finding of the city which is so meticulously described, and particularly having the measurements, or at least the proportions, which it is stated to have possessed, is something else again. Only two major claims have been put forth that a particular locality holds the ruins of a prehistoric metropolis laid out as Plato described it. In the *Critias*, as translated by Thomas Taylor, this urban area is portrayed as follows:

"... Neptune . . . enclosed the hill . . . with spiral streams of water; the sea and the land at the same time alternatively forming about each other lesser and larger zones. Of these, two were formed by the land, and three by the sea . . . those who resided about the ancient metropolis united by bridges those zones of the sea . . . The island which contained the palace of the

king . . . they inclosed with a wall of stone . . . They likewise covered the superficies of the wall which inclosed the most outward zone with brass . . . they covered the superficies of that wall which inclosed the interior zone with tin; and lastly, they covered that which inclosed the acropolis with orichalcum, which shines with a fiery splendour”.

In 1929 Professor Paul Borchardt of Munich, geographer and explorer, claimed that he had located all of the geographic features mentioned by Plato, including the city, in the salt swamps between the Schott el Dejrid and the Gulf of Gabes in the Mediterranean Sea. Artificial canals, hot and cold springs, and various artifacts were found in this North African site by Borchardt, who, aided by his scholarly friend Dr. Albert Herrmann of the University of Berlin, found no problems in assigning the whole of the Atlantis story to a small locality near Tunis, which was assertedly devastated by an earthquake about 1250 B.C.

A more recent announcement of the same type, which attracted much notice from the press in August, 1952, was the finding of a submerged city five miles from the coast of Helgoland. Allegedly guided by the description given by Plato, Pastor Jurgen Spanuth of West Bordelum ab Bredstedt led a small expedition to his selected site in the North Sea, and there a diver located an oval wall, 1000 yards long and over 300 yards across. Suggestions of buildings were found inside the walled area, but Pastor Spanuth despite his conviction that this was the great city of which Plato wrote, was unable to investigate them further at this time.

There would appear to be some significance in the fact that in at least two separated localities, the remains of cities can be found which correspondes to a remarkable degree with Plato's description, except in the matter of extent. While there is no reason for believing that Atlantis was actually located elsewhere than where Plato situated it—in the midst of the Atlantic Ocean—this coincidence in the matter of design and location of other smaller cities would seem to require some explanation.

It appears quite possible that in the sites described by Spanuth and Borchardt, as well as others suggested or yet to be uncovered, there is evidence of the construction by Atlantean colonists of cities patterned after the metropolis of Poseidonis, but on a lesser scale. That a group of habitations surrounded by concentric rings of land and water, or even by circular moats,

would be easily defended against attackers is evident; but if, as Manly Palmer Hall has pointed out in *Atlantis: An Interpretation*, there was a symbolical significance to this design as well, then it would appear logical that the scattered centres of Atlantean culture would be built along the same plain as their larger prototype. Settled originally by migrants from the mother continent, and then surviving the catastrophe which sent their homeland to the bottom of the ocean, they might preserve, in a nearly pure form, many of the original customs and tenets of Atlantis.

Something of an analogy may be drawn here with the present-day existence of a "New York"—named after a "York" that the early settlers in America had known in the country of their origin. There is a "New Bedford", a "New Hampshire", and other towns and districts—California was once entitled "New Albion", and "New Guinea" survives to this day—all keeping in the memory of the immigrants that place they had left behind.

Curiously there are a number of ancient sites which bear the name of Atlantis, or some variant of it. A buried city called Atlantida is believed by some explorers to exist on the Cumina River, in the state of Para, Brazil. John D. Baldwin, in *Ancient America*, notes that: "A city named *Atlan* existed when the continent was discovered by Columbus, at the entrance to the Gulf of Uraha, in Darien . . ." The fact that they were once only a colony might be forgotten when the memory of the original Atlantis had grown dim long after its sinking, and the original name would be applied to the secondary location by its inhabitants.

Atlantologists should not ignore these locations in their search for data about the mother continent, however. For here is a potential source of artifacts which had once been brought from Poseidonis, either for trade or sacred purposes, and then were lost when the colony declined or was destroyed. Radiocarbon dating methods could be applied to all appropriate objects excavated at such a site, and if they gave an age approximating 12,000 years, could be given consideration as possible genuine Atlantean relics.

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